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as a drama. Shelley has translated some portions of it, which may be found among his poems.

Such, with a couple of biographical notices, are the contents of this volume, which will serve the student as an excellent introduction into the vast field of the Spanish drama.

7. — *Michael Angelo considered as a Philosophical Poet. With Translations.* By JOHN EDWARD TAYLOR. London : Saunders and Otley. 12mo. pp. 139.

THIS is a very clever and agreeable book. The author is evidently a man of taste and high literary accomplishment. He shows himself familiar with the literature and art of Italy, and particularly with the poetry of Dante. The object of the present treatise is to exhibit the character of Michael Angelo, as he has shown it in his poems ; to draw from these records of the great artist's genius the views and principles and the lofty feelings, which guided him in his sublime creations. In order to illustrate his subject, the author has presented us an ingenious disquisition upon the allegorical poetry of the age. He carries his theory perhaps further than most Italian scholars would be likely to admit it ; but he mingles with his general views many remarks of great value upon single points. The part of the book which pleases us particularly is the explanation of Michael Angelo's *idéal*, as distinguished from the ideal of the ancient sculptors. The following passage will be found interesting to the lovers of the poetry and art of the greatest age of Italy.

“ Michael Angelo was from an early age devoted to the study of the poetry of Dante and Petrarca ; it is said that he knew by heart at one time nearly all the sonnets of the latter. Much however as he admired and imitated the imagery of Petrarca, the boldness of Dante's genius was more congenial to his own. The refinement of taste in the age of Michael Angelo preferred the elegance of style, the harmonious flow, of the muse of Petrarca, who became the model of all succeeding poets. The wide difference between those great masters of the Italian language has been well defined by Foscolo in his parallel of the two. But what is most admirable in the *Rime* of Michael Angelo, is, that he so harmonizes the elegance of the one with the grandeur and solidity of the other, as to obliterate their discrepancies and to form a perfect unity of character. Out of differing elements he creates, rather than remodels, a style of poetry, and stamps it with an originality ; and his frequent imitation of passages both from Dante and Petrarca gives us

more the impression of his perfect conversance with their productions, than of transcription and paraphrase. But in his poetry, as in his designs, Dante was the text-book of his thoughts, and innumerable instances in either might be cited to illustrate this. In the 'Last Judgment' Dante has furnished the artist with many thoughts from the 'Inferno' of the 'Divina Commedia'; and one of the most interesting monuments of the genius of one artist illustrated by the kindred spirit of another, was the copy of Dante's great poem which Michael Angelo had enriched with marginal designs. This inestimable treasure perished, it is well known, in a shipwreck.

"There is a similarity in the character of Dante to that of our artist, which I may here briefly notice. How gloriously is the sympathy of the two marked in the sonnets which he wrote on Dante! * The mind of the latter was wonderfully fitted by nature to meet and to resist the injuries of the world, and the still greater trial of fortitude, the ingratitude of his own country. Strengthened for the task by the deep and severe studies of the schools, he felt himself superior to injury, his spirit recoiled within itself, and a philosophic equanimity, springing from the conscious dignity and purity of his own mind, never forsook him. We can hear him exclaim,

'Conscienza m'assicura,
La buona compagnia, che l'uom francheggia
Sotto l'usbergo del sentirsi pura.'

'The power of despising,' says Foscolo, 'which many boast, which few really possess, and with which Dante was uncommonly gifted by nature, afforded him the highest delight of which a lofty mind is susceptible.'

"If the fortitude of Michael Angelo was not subjected to the same test, it was tried in another way. He had not to undergo banishment and persecution; but, in the ardent pursuit of his art, he was crossed by the constant efforts of a petty jealousy to thwart his designs and divert from him the favor of the great and powerful. These mean artifices filled him with a just but silent contempt. He was above stooping to resentment; for, as he himself observed, 'He who contends with the worthless must always be a loser.' His pride showed itself to those only who were mean; he was naturally of a kind disposition, ever free and anxious to impart information and advice to others in his art; but toward supercilious ignorance his spirit was unbending, and he could as ill brook an unmerited indignity from a pope as from a peasant. When Julius II. refused him an audience time after time, Michael Angelo indignantly returned home, saying, 'If his Holiness wants me from this time forward, he must seek me elsewhere.' The same night he left Rome. The Pope sent five couriers to bring him back; but, when they overtook him, he was beyond the papal jurisdiction. They delivered the Pope's letter, which ran thus; 'Return immediately to Rome, on pain of our displeasure.' But his spirit refused to bow, and he wrote the following reply; 'Being expelled the antechamber of your Holiness, conscious of not meriting the disgrace, I took the only

* See Mr. Southey's admirable translations of these in Duppa's 'Life of Michael Angelo.'

course left me, consistent with the preservation of that character which has hitherto rendered me worthy your confidence. *Nor can I return*; for, if I were undeserving of your esteem yesterday, I shall not be worthy of it tomorrow, unless by the caprice of fortune, which can be as little desirable to your Holiness as myself.' A reconciliation afterwards took place at Bologna, whither Michael Angelo went to meet the Pope after his subjection of that territory to his allegiance."

The translations in this volume seem to be very close and correct.

8. — *Poems*. By J. N. McJILTON. Boston : Otis, Broaders, & Co. 12mo. pp. 360.

MR. McJILTON describes his Muse, in the Preface, as an "inoffensive" one. He says truth. Nothing can be more inoffensive than are most of her doings. Writing such poetry is undoubtedly one of the most harmless in-door amusements for a rainy day, that have ever been hit upon. It is peculiarly eligible, from being adapted to the capacities of so many, who might not be able to get on, if any thing more tasking were imposed upon them. In this age of rapid and easy composition, it is the easiest thing in the world to hitch into rhyme a series of common-place truisms, mingled with feeble sentimentality, and to make it pass with good-natured friends for poetry,—in fact, to make it look very much *like* poetry. There is a vast mass of pretty expressions, half lines, epithets of excellent aspect, and comparisons and other figures of speech that have only been used since the days of Homer, and that may be had "as cheap as"—any refuse. Persons of amiable temper and youthful inexperience are very apt, especially young gentlemen with sisters and maiden aunts, to let themselves be cheated into the notion of their being poets, because they can work up these abundant materials into the forms of verse. This sort of poetical genius is a disease incident to early life, like the measles and hooping-cough; but, if the patient survives to years of discretion, it commonly leaves no permanent effects on the constitution. It is desirable that the friends of the young sufferer should watch it with some care, and keep its poetical ailments as much as possible within the family circle. But this is what friends are not sufficiently accustomed to do. The complaint is apt to get out; next-door neighbours are pretty sure to hear of it; then the newspapers take it up;